

Adam Brown

Dear Mr. Wright,

I recently had the great privilege of reading your novel, Black Boy. This book has changed the way I view many things and ideas in my life. When I now hear about the struggles of my elders and the adversity they had to endure, I can understand their trials and tribulations more. I compare it to seeing clearly for the first time. Truthfully, I already knew about oppression and segregation, but your personal account made it real.

In the novel you tell about yourself, your family, and the people you have come in contact with. There was one instance where you had to live in an orphanage because your mother couldn't afford to keep you. That has to be hard no matter who you are or where you come from. There was another part of the book which made me feel sympathy for the people of that time. I sympathized with my African American elders who were used, abused, and mistreated just because of their color. I sympathized with the whites who were brought up and raised in ignorance. That part was when your white co-workers "ganged up" on you and practically forced you to quit. Another similar account was when your boss and your friend's boss manipulated you two to fight each other. Your bosses used you like pieces in a game; if they did that to you, they probably did it to other African Americans as well.

These vivid descriptions were and are important to me because I can now understand why my elders fought so tirelessly for social and racial equality. This taught me why the Black Panther Party was formed. This taught me why Malcolm X spoke so passionately. This also taught me why Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. had a dream and why he led marches to fulfill them. I now realize with even more clarity why my grandparents have higher expectations of my generation.

Mr. Wright, my generation has so many more opportunities than you or your generation ever had and we don't even take advantage of them. If you had never persevered and worked hard to get an education you might not have ever written Black Boy. You could have been like the elevator operator in your novel, who let whites kick his butt. He was a survivor, but he could have been something bigger and better (if he would have gotten his education). Mr. Wright, you have moved past so many things like poverty and oppression that could have really stopped you. That gives me hope! I



can become a doctor, lawyer, or a financial advisor; all I have to do is persevere through my struggles.

Now that I have read your inspiring work, I appreciate the people that have come before me. I appreciate my grandfathers, who both came from the South to make a better life for their families. With a better perception, I can understand the struggle it was to get an education, move ahead, get promotions, and even happily live. It is a shame that those things that I mentioned were a struggle in a country based on "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." You, Mr. Wright and Black Boy have changed the way I view my elders and that period of time. I thank you and I appreciate every word you wrote.

Graciously,

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